



ANG

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Editorial

Propagate the good news about the armed struggle

The joy and inspiration that victorious tactical offensives and other revolutionary triumphs bring to the Filipino people and the world's peoples are undeniable.

Every victory in the arena of armed struggle steels their determination to advance the revolution.

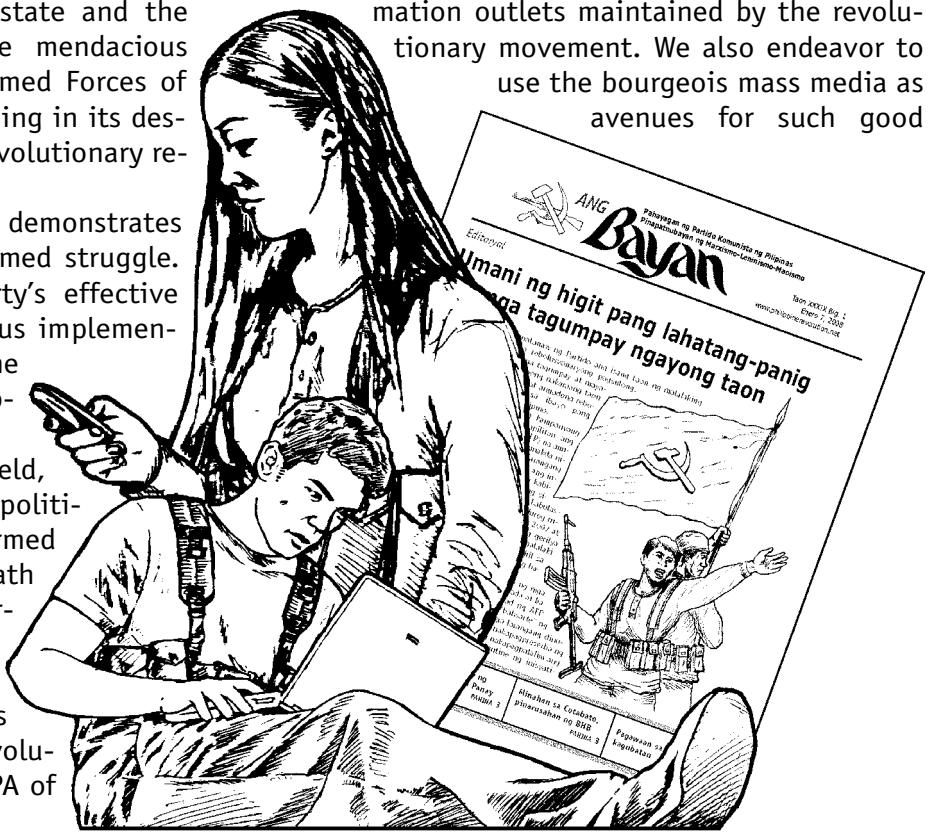
Every victorious tactical offensive of the New People's Army (NPA) is likewise a slap on the face of the fascist army, the reactionary puppet state and the system they defend. It exposes the mendacious claims being bandied about by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that it is succeeding in its desperate goal of defeating the people's revolutionary resistance.

Every victorious tactical offensive demonstrates not only an advance in the field of armed struggle. It likewise presents proof of the Party's effective leadership, the NPA's strict and vigorous implementation of its political work and the breadth and depth of the people's support.

For every encounter in the battlefield, there is a corresponding battle in the political realm. Behind the revolutionary armed struggle are the various life-and-death aspirations and issues that are of interest to the people. At every opportunity, the enemy portrays the NPA's tactical offensives as acts of terrorism in its desperate attempt to obscure their revolutionary significance and deprive the NPA of mass support.

Thus, with every tactical offensive comes a most important duty to bring the revolutionary good news to all. The significance of every tactical offensive goes beyond the guerrilla front where it was launched. It extends to all other fronts, to the entire revolutionary movement and people.

The foremost propagators of such news are the revolutionary newspapers and other news and information outlets maintained by the revolutionary movement. We also endeavor to use the bourgeois mass media as avenues for such good



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news to be able to reach a broader audience.

Through our publications, we can ensure that the correct information is made available to all. We are also able to explain thoroughly the true politico-military relevance of our victorious tactical offensives.

We must all exert effort to have news from the field of armed struggle published in the pages of *Ang Bayan*. As the national revolutionary newspaper, it strives to report all tactical offensives—big or small. There are many weaknesses that must be overcome in the system of relaying news and information.

Lately, the number of victorious tactical offensives have far outnumbered those that have been actually reported in *AB*.

We can expect to accumulate even more victories in the months and years to come in the face of the Party Central Committee's call to continually intensify tactical offensives.

We likewise expect *AB*'s pages to be filled with

good news about such triumphs. This can be achieved through the assiduous and timely relay by all units of reports on every victory in the armed struggle and other areas of revolutionary work. By sending general reports and correspondence that contain in-depth discussions of revolutionary advance in their respective areas of responsibility, Party units contribute immensely in sharing lessons and providing inspiration.

Drafting plans and organizing the necessary machinery to promptly and securely relay news on tactical offensives, other revolutionary breakthroughs and victories as well as the situation of their revolutionary work and forces to *Ang Bayan* and other concerned Party propaganda organs are urgent tasks of all leading Party committees at every level.

Let us all join hands to assiduously implement the task of reporting news about our revolutionary victories and advances to the entire revolutionary movement, the Filipino people and the entire world. **AB**

The counterrevolutionary forces' schemes are bound to fail

The counterrevolutionary forces' schemes to crush the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), New People's Army (NPA) and the revolutionary forces before the end of 2010 are bound to fail. Instead, the latter will gain strength and expand to

fill up all congressional districts, with armed partisans likewise freely operating in many cities nationwide.

National Democratic Front of the Philippines senior political consultant Jose Ma. Sison issued this statement on January 12 in re-

action to boastful claims by the Arroyo regime and its military personnel that the Armed Forces of the Philippines dismantled 13 guerrilla fronts in 2007 and is set to reduce the number of NPA guerrillas to less than 6,000.

Comrade Sison pointed out that Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) 2 failed to dismantle even a single guerrilla front, while the NPA, on the other hand, has been able to recruit more Red fighters and seize hundreds of firearms from the state's armed forces. Comrade Sison also cited statements by CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal that the AFP is only able to concentrate on not more than 10% of all guerrilla fronts at a time. In addition, the armed enemy is confused with the NPA's flexible use of its tactics of concentration, dispersal and shifting of forces according to circumstances.

The CPP Central Committee has announced that it is already providing politico-military education



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Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news. Readers are likewise enjoined to send in their comments and suggestions for the betterment of our publication. You can reach us by email at:

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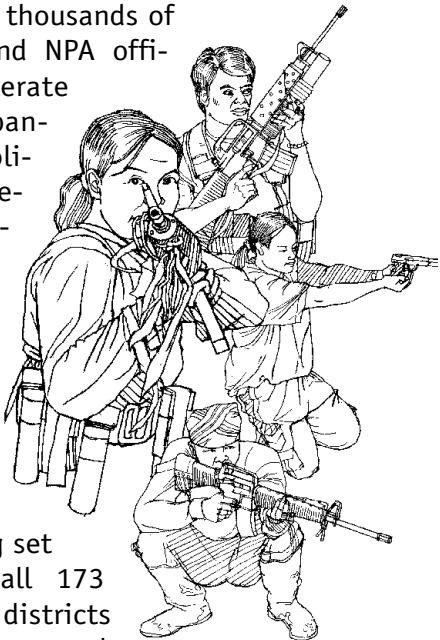
Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines

and training to thousands of Party cadres and NPA officers to accelerate the NPA's expansion and consolidation. NPA regional and provincial commands are also being organized along with their strike force platoons, and more guerrilla fronts are being set up to cover all 173 congressional districts in the provinces and enable armed partisans to operate in all 44 urban congressional districts. People's militias and self-defense units will likewise be organized and trained in villages where the revolutionary forces operate.

Futile ambition. The NDFP has repeatedly proposed to the Arroyo regime the resumption of formal peace talks or even the continuation of exploratory negotiations before such formal talks. The regime, however, continues to disregard such proposals, irrationally obsessed as it is in pursuing its futile ambition of decisively crippling the Maoist party's 39-year old armed revolution before 2010.

The Arroyo regime is aware that the armed revolutionary movement has gained strength, and that Oplan Bantay Laya 1 and its current OBL 2's failure has been exposed to the public. It nonetheless persists in issuing psywar declarations to cover up its failures and the revolutionary movement's victories in a continuing effort to deceive the people.

According to the Party Central Committee, the armed revolution continues to grow and advance towards the next higher stage of people's war. The revolutionary movement and forces are determined to pursue their plans and they have the organized strength and capability to do so. They can take advantage of the worsening conditions of socio-economic and political crisis. Before and beyond 2010, the armed revolution will be launching tactical offensives to belie the Arroyo regime's much-vaunted military victories, said Comrade Sison. AB



Arroyo's National ID system and Cha-cha ploy

A scheme to cling to power

Gloria Arroyo is reviving the long-defunct national identification (ID) system and charter change scheme to enable herself to prolong her hold on power.

National ID system. The National ID system was discussed in a military-police command conference attended by Arroyo herself at Camp Aguinaldo. Arroyo ordered the Department of National Defense to study how the government could circumvent constitutional prohibitions as well as Supreme Court rulings against the national ID system. She plans to have the system in place this year.

The US has long been enforcing an ID system in Sulu communities as part of its measures to control the movements of the local populace in the name of suppressing the Abu Sayaff. It is also being implemented in a barangay in Davao City. These areas are obviously being used as laboratories for plans to implement the ID system nationwide.

The regime claims that a national ID system will contribute to efforts to stamp out criminality and terrorism. It says that the ID will merely consolidate the various IDs such as the Social Security System ID and the Philippine Health Corporation (PhilHealth) card and will merely contain basic information already present in other IDs.

In fact, the AFP and PNP are pushing the national ID system under the aegis of the counterrevolutionary





Oplan Bantay Laya 2 and as a means of suppressing the regime's enemies. The real reason why the military and police want to enforce the national ID system is to intensify surveillance and control of the people's movements. The regime wants to preempt any movement that would oust it from power or thwart Arroyo's plans to stay in power beyond 2010. The national ID will definitely be used to harass and pressure anti-Arroyo groups and individuals.

The only thing that could be expected of the national ID system is the proliferation of human rights violations and the suppression of the people's civil liberties.

In fact, the national ID system is even worse than the cedula system enforced by Gen. Jovito Palparan when he was still the commander of the 7th Infantry Division in Central Luzon. It will be recalled that Palparan and his troops obliged the people of Nueva Ecija, Bulacan and other neighboring provinces to have their cedulas on their person at all times. Those without cedulas were arbitrarily accused of being outsiders and members or supporters of the NPA. Palparan's cedula system resulted in a long list of human rights violations.

Charter Change. Arroyo's growing anxiousness about her hold on power as the 2010 elections near has spurred a renewed drive to change the constitution to enable her to continue her rule.

For now, she uses the Moro struggle as a pretext, claiming that charter change is the solution to what the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has been fighting for. The regime claims that it is the ancestral domain issue that has been the stumbling block to continuing the peace negotiations between the government and the MILF.

Presidential peace process adviser Jess Dureza claims that the solution to the Moro people's concerns is a shift to the federal system. MILF civil-military affairs chief Eid Kabalu has strongly assailed Dureza's statement, as there was nothing in their consensus points with the Arroyo government stating that the finalization of their agreement would be anchored on charter change.

Meanwhile, Arroyo's minions in Congress are busy preparing new bills to push Cha-Cha. The Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) has likewise begun to cook up another People's Initiative.

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Moro youth leader slain, Masbate peasant leader gunned down

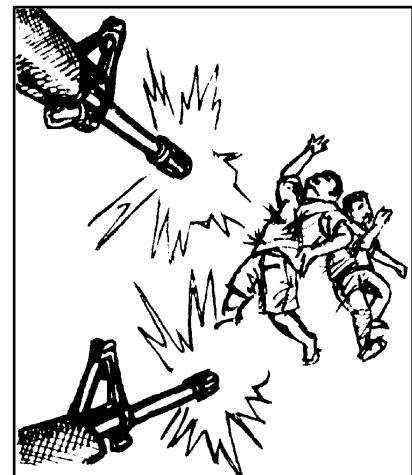
Killings and other military abuses continue without letup nationwide. A peasant leader was killed in Masbate and a Moro youth leader slain in Zamboanga Sibugay this January. The harassment of progressives and the persecution of the peasant masses in the countryside likewise go on unabated.

January 16. Elements of the PNP 5th Regional Mobile Group abducted and killed Teldo Rebamonte, 45, leader of the Masbate People's Organization. Rebamonte was seized on January 12 and his body found with torture marks in Barangay Nabasagan, Claveria, Masbate. He was set to attend the commemoration of the Mendiola Massacre.

January 11. More than 20 Dumagat tribespeople from Quezon have been forced by the military to undergo training for the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit. Four Dumagat minorities escaped after three weeks of training when they were ordered to do things against their will. They have been forced to flee for fear of retaliation. Two Dumagat families are currently in Metro Manila to avoid military harassment. The AFP is launching intense military operations in Quezon, one of the priority areas under Oplan Bantay Laya 2.

January 10. Military and police forces illegally arrested CPP-NPA-Albay leader and NDF Peace Panel consultant Glicerio "Ka Choy" Pernia in Sta. Maria, Bulacan. Pernia's arrest is a violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees. The NDF-Bicol also demanded his release on humanitarian grounds as Pernia suffers from hypertension, heart and kidney disease.

January 8. A guard from a banana plantation shot and killed Sahiron Banggot, 22, vice chairman of the Liga ng Kabataang Moro (LKM) and a student at the Bacalan National High School in Zamboanga Sibugay. LKM is a member or-





ganization of Suara Bangsamoro. Banggot and his friend Joe Enriquez, 22, were on their way to the plantation of the Tambanan Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Multi-Purpose Cooperative (TARBEMCO) when the youth leader was shot by the guard. Banggot suffered seven fatal gunshot wounds. Enriquez, on the other hand, was locked inside an abandoned room in one of the buildings inside the plantation and released the following day. It was only then that Banggot's parents learned of their son's fate.

December 22, 2007. Houses and schoolbuildings in shambles, books and school equipment strewn around, missing pigs and chickens and rice stocks gone. This was what more than 2,000 evacuees from 12 barangays in Andap Valley, Lianga, Surigao del Sur found when they returned to their villages four days before Christmas. No one else could have done this but the military, they said. They refused to believe claims by Maj. Samuel Sagun, spokesperson of the Cagayan de Oro-based 4th ID, that NPA guerrilla forces were responsible for the havoc.

December 2007. Four church leaders of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente have received death threats and are under strict surveillance by thugs of the Arroyo regime. They are Bishop Delfin Callao Jr. of Davao City, Rev. Eleuterio Revollido of Urdaneta City, Rev. Gilbert Garcia of San Clemente, Tarlac and Rev. Antonio Ablon of Cagayan de Oro City. Military agents have also repeatedly

broken into Reverend Garcia's convent. The PNP has done nothing even after Reverend Garcia reported the break-ins to the police. He has also received text messages from persons claiming responsibility for Bishop Alberto Ramento's murder in October 2006, stating that he would be the next victim. Reverend Garcia, 25, is a member of the Promotion of Church People's Response and chaired the Seminarians on Transformation and Nationalism and the Council of Seminarians when he was a student.

Labor leaders victims of killings, harassment.

Anakpawis Rep. Crispin "Ka Bel" Beltran reported that 33 out of 144 killings of union leaders in 2007 occurred in the Philippines. He added that there were likewise more than 800 cases of beatings and torture of union leaders and activists in the country. The reports are contained in the 2007

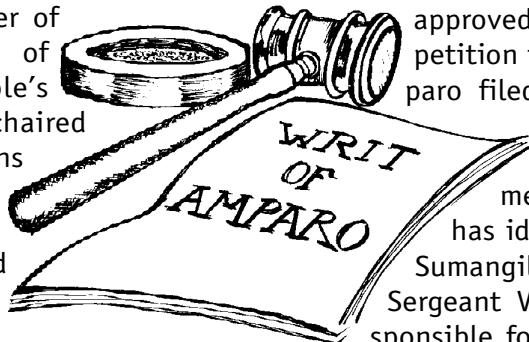
Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations issued by the International Trade Union Confederation. Ka Bel filed House Resolution 299 on January 6, calling on the House of Representatives Committee on Civil, Political and Human Rights and Committee on Labor and Employment to conduct an investigation on these violations. Beltran also proposed an investigation on the continuing harassment and abduction by military elements of

union leaders and workers' rights advocates especially in Central Luzon. Co-authors of the resolution are Bayan Muna Reps. Satur Ocampo and Teodoro Casiño and Gabriela Reps. Liza Maza and Luzviminda Ilagan.

Supreme Court grants writ of amparo to family of abducted Aeta tribesmen.

The court approved on January 9 a petition for a writ of amparo filed by the family of two missing Aeta tribesmen. The family has identified 2Lt. Ali Sumangil and a certain Sergeant Villalobos as responsible for the abduction of Nicolas Sanchez and his cousin Heherson Medina on September 17, 2006 in Capas, Tarlac. The petition for a writ of amparo was filed by Cleofas Sanchez, mother of Nicolas Sanchez. The court was also able to determine during the hearing that Sanchez and Medina were detained in Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija and forced to become servants of the military while under guard by elements of the 71st IB at Camp Bravo inside Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac City. A witness, Josephine Victoria, said she saw the two victims inside the Northern Luzon Command's Camp Servillano Aquino in San Miguel, Tarlac.

Sanchez had first asked the Supreme Court to grant her family permanent protection and allow them to inspect Camp Servillano Aquino, the camps of the 71st IB in Tarlac, and Fort Magsaysay in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija where they believe the two victims are being held. The Supreme Court approved her petition and directed the Court of Appeals to hear the case.



Ka Gino: Valiant and veteran Red fighter

Ka Gino is one of many exemplary Filipino revolutionaries ardently serving the people to the best of their abilities in the face of grave hardship, sacrifice and trials. He is at present one of the most veteran Party cadres and New People's Army fighters in Cagayan Valley. His personal history is intimately intertwined with the revolutionary movement's colorful history in northeastern Luzon.

Ka Gino began his political involvement in the latter part of the 1960s, when he was still a bachelor. From Pangasinan, his family was forced to migrate to southern Isabela in the 1950s because of severe poverty. The village they settled in, in Isabela's Forest Region, became one of the NPA's first areas of operation.

Less than a month after the NPA was established in Tarlac, a number of cadres from Central Luzon began conducting social investigation and mass work in the Forest Region. With them were a number of new comrades from Isabela. By the end of 1969, the revolution had begun to take root not only in the Forest Region but in part of the province's plains areas.

Due to the strict adherence to the line of new democratic revolution, the revolutionary movement in the Cagayan Valley region quickly expanded. Up to 120 Bar-

rio Organizing Committees and Barrio Revolutionary Committees had been set up in a short period.

The NPA quickly grew in size, and the first fighting unit in the region was established in Isabela. Before the end of 1972, there were two companies (Coy A and Coy B), each encompassing a 1,000-strong people's militia. Small military actions by the NPA proliferated. Eventually, tactical offensives were launched in various areas in Isabela.

Ka Gino joined the Kabataang Makabayan in 1969. After a few months, he was appointed leader of the local KM chapter in their barrio. He gained a deeper understanding of society and revolution by assiduously attending revolutionary courses. After a few years, he headed one of the first people's militias established in the province.

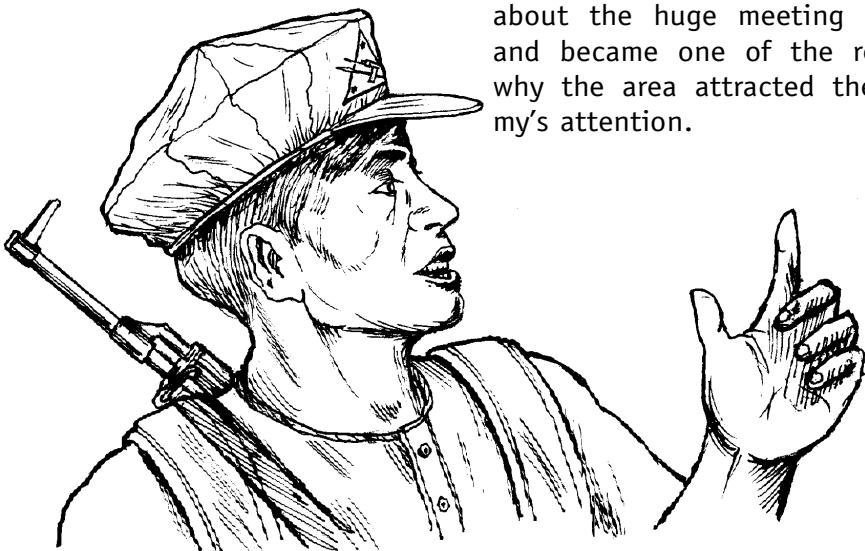
Once, he attended a meeting of the people's militia that drew up to a thousand people. News about the huge meeting spread and became one of the reasons why the area attracted the enemy's attention.

UPON the declaration of martial law in September 1972, the US-Marcos dictatorship launched its most intensive and violent attacks against both the revolutionary forces in the northeastern Luzon region and the Moro people. At least 7,000 AFP troops were used by the dictatorship in successive military campaigns from 1972 to 1976 focused on Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya.

Ka Gino and his family felt the brunt of the enemy's vicious attacks. He and his brothers were captured and imprisoned in 1972. In the months they were incarcerated, the military abused and enslaved them. They escaped at the first opportunity and went straight to the nearest NPA camp to join the people's army. Many others from their village decided to join the NPA, including Ka Gino's father.

Since then, Ka Gino became witness and participant in the overall history of the revolutionary movement in the region. He experienced how the mass base was built step-by-step in the region, the conduct of the NPA's tactical offensives and how the people's army and the revolutionary masses heroically confronted the enemy's attacks, and the many twists and turns as well as the victories of the revolutionary movement in their area and other parts of the region.

Ka Gino and the other comrades faced grave hardships in defending themselves and evading the enemy's intense encirclement and suppression campaign in the people's army's early phases of base building in Isabela's Forest Region. The enemy descended on the area, forcing the 50,000 people living in the Forest Region to



evacuate, following the framework of "denying the revolutionary forces of their mass base." The entire area was turned into a "free fire zone" and "no man's land," with the enemy killing anyone they found.

Ka Gino experienced the enemy's unbridled cruelty as the latter launched biochemical warfare and poisoned the rivers. The enemy also unleashed "Japanese mosquitos" to spread malaria in Isabela's Forest Region. Many Red fighters and villagers fell victim to malaria and other ailments that grew to epidemic proportions. A number of platoons under the NPA's Coy A and Coy B were paralyzed after fighters fell ill simultaneously or in quick succession.

Hunger became a serious problem because the enemy destroyed crops and any other foodstuff in every field and swidden farm and killed every animal they found. Finding and producing food and other basic needs became a major operation for comrades and the townsfolk.

Comrades called on the masses not to evacuate and instead set up new settlements deep in the forest. But the villagers left their homes, isolating the people's army from the masses. The revolutionary mass organizations and organs of political power were demolished.

Comrades at that time committed the striking error of prematurely building base areas, dogmatically copying the experience of people's war in China. Their areas of operation became constricted, reduced as they were to mere physical bases especially after the few villagers left behind retreated deep into the forest or accompanied the people's army. The comrades prematurely maintained reg-



ular mobile company formations and failed to develop the skills needed to maintain platoons as well as the tactics and techniques needed by small fighting units.

Even back then, there were comrades who proposed a shift towards the vast and thickly populated plains of Cagayan province and other areas to obtain immediate relief from the enemy encirclement. They proposed that the NPA expand, build its strength and set up new mass bases in other areas while the enemy was focused in Isabela's forests and resume operations in the province when the situation eased up. But such proposals were largely ignored. Instead, most comrades insisted on defending their physical base.

In this situation, the Red army was reduced to hiding in a forest that was constantly being encircled, scoured and bombed by the enemy. Successive defensive battles occurred. The NPA lost up to 70% of its leaders, members and firepower to the enemy. The people's army became politically and militarily passive and demoralization became widespread. Despite such severe hardships, the heroism of thousands of comrades and rev-

olutionary masses shone through. Many were imprisoned and tortured in enemy camps. Hundreds of Party members, Red fighters and revolutionary forces were martyred.

A Political and Military Conference conducted in November 1974 reviewed and analyzed the revolutionary movement's four-year experience in the region. The conference criticized the conduct of attritive and decisive battles in the face of the enemy's superior strength, and the premature defense of a base

area especially in the absence of mass support. The conference decided to shift the bulk of the Red army towards the vast areas to the north, south and west where the masses were and the enemy had a relatively weak presence. The shift would mainly be directed towards Cagayan province and secondarily, towards Aurora province. Also cited was Kalinga-Apayao province.

Ka Gino was part of the first group that undertook the historic march from Isabela's Forest Region in 1974. But instead of going to Cagayan as directed, the group went to the Nueva Vizcaya-Quirino area (en route to Aurora). A number of them arrived in Aurora after managing to evade the enemy's intensive operations and attacks. Some of them were also able to reach Kalinga-Apayao. But most of them, including Ka Gino, were forced to return after facing the enemy's vicious attacks.

Back in the Forest Region, Ka Gino was among those assigned to recover guerrilla zones in the villages of Echague and Jones at the forest's periphery. Ka Gino's steadfastness grew in their effort to expand to new areas and recover villages temporarily abandoned in



the face of ferocious enemy attacks. He overcame his grief over the death of one of his brothers in a firefight. He likewise overcame the grave demoralization that struck their unit due to fatigue, hunger, illness and the deaths of many comrades.

Ka Gino later joined the massive exodus of the NPA's main force towards Cagayan. After escaping from an area constricted by enemy encirclement and arriving in a place that was highly populated and where conditions were relatively easier, Ka Gino became part of the resurgence in mass work, army building and other advances in revolutionary work.

Meanwhile, the other NPA forces that arrived in Aurora and reached Nueva Ecija and eastern Pangasinan were able to expand the revolutionary movement in eastern Central Luzon. Those who reached Kalinga-Apayao were also able to expand and link up with other comrades in the Cordillera.

After close to four decades, Ka Gino persists in the revolutionary struggle, becoming part of its every twist and turn and determined to be a part of the continued advance of people's war.

Ka Gino is not only a tested and valiant cadre and fighter. He is also an exemplary father, husband and son. Since joining the NPA, he has never relented in touching base with his family, giving revolutionary advice, encouraging them and raising their morale. Thus, his family has never stopped supporting him.

In fact, many of them, including his children, are also active in the revolutionary movement. He hopes that someday, even his grandchildren will march in step with him in advancing the revolution.

AB

US intervention in Pakistan

On December 27, former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was assassinated. She was shot by a gunman and then hit by a powerful bomb in the city of Rawalpindi in the thick of campaigning for the elections. Bhutto headed the Pakistan People's Party, a major party running in the polls called by Gen. Pervez Musharraf at the prodding of the US.

Criticism rained on Musharraf from within and outside Pakistan because of widespread belief that the dictator was behind Bhutto's assassination. In the face of protests, Musharraf postponed the elections set this January. He took advantage of the chaos generated by the assassination to declare emergency rule and intensify the open fascist dictatorship against the people of Pakistan.

The US feigned disappointment over Bhutto's killing, saying it was a "step backward" in efforts to "restore democracy" in Pakistan.

US intervention in Pakistan is no secret. On the one hand, it gives all-out support to Musharraf's fascist regime. On the other hand, it likewise pushed plans to make Bhutto prime minister through an election, while retaining Musharraf as president. It was in accordance with this plan that Bhutto returned to Pakistan in October 2007 from her long exile to campaign in the elections.

The US pushed such plans in its desire to provide Musharraf's fascist military government a civilian face, assuage contradictions within the ruling class and diminish the political crisis, thereby defending and promoting US political and military interests in Pakistan and the region.

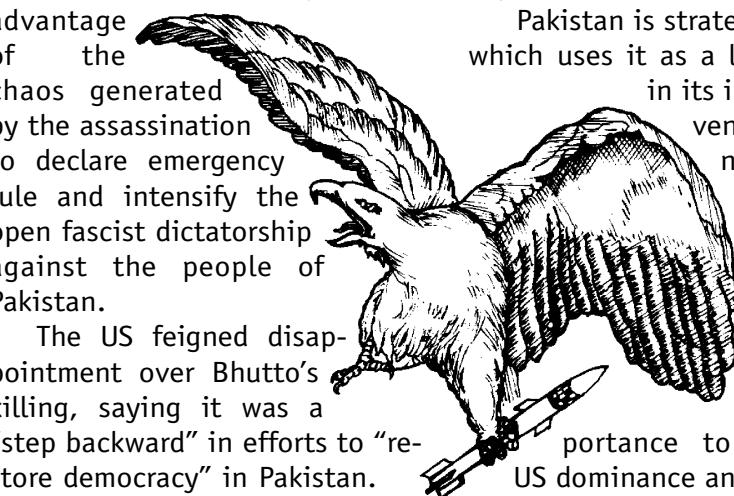
US interests in Pakistan

Ever since Musharraf seized power in a military coup in Pakistan in 1999, the US has considered him a key ally in its terrorist war launched in the name of fighting terrorism.

Pakistan is strategic to the US, which uses it as a launching pad in its interventionist ventures into the neighboring countries of Afghanistan, China, India and Iran. Also a big factor in the country's importance to maintaining US dominance and influence in the region is Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons. Pakistan has thus long served as a staging point for US military intervention and expansionism. It is the US' "regional military power center" from South to Central Asia.

The US has had a long history of supporting successive fascist dictatorships in Pakistan, the better to use the country in intervening in the region and its neighboring countries' affairs.

Since 1953, after a US-supported coup overthrew Pakistan's first ever civilian government and replaced it with Gov. Gen. Ghulam Mohammad's dictatorship, the US has been funding regimes and the military in the country. The US' immediate goal then was to use





Pakistan as a foil against the social imperialist Soviet Union and the latter's influence over neighboring Afghanistan.

Successive military dictatorships have since been established in Pakistan, all of them US puppets. The US supported Gen. Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq's dictatorship, which deposed Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Benazir Bhutto's father) in a coup in 1977 and hanged him two years later. After this, the US expanded its support for the Zia-ul-Haq regime to use it in conniving with the Taliban and al-Qaeda groups against the influx of Soviet troops into Afghanistan and the Soviet Union's direct occupation of this country. US military and financial support for reactionary and puppet regimes in Pakistan continued to pour in despite the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989.

After the overthrow of the Taliban and the establishment of a pro-imperialist puppet regime in Afghanistan, the US continued funding Musharraf's dictatorship in order to support the US-allied regime in Afghanistan against the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The US has multiplied its financial and military support to Afghanistan severalfold since US President Bush launched di-

rect aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and intervened in other areas of the globe in the name of its "war against terror." From a mere \$9.1 million in 1998-2000, US military aid to Pakistan suddenly ballooned to \$4.2 billion in 2001-2003. Including economic aid, the US gave a total of \$10 billion to Pakistan in this period. Thus, Pakistan now comes third to Egypt and Israel among countries receiving the largest aid packages from the US.

In exchange, Musharraf allowed the US to use its military bases in Pakistan to attack communities and countries tagged by the US as "terrorists." The Musharraf dictatorship conspired with US in-

telligence agencies to identify and illegally detain, torture and kill individuals suspected of being dangerous enemies of the US.

To serve the US' war of aggression, Musharraf blocked Pakistan's border with Afghanistan to deprive Taliban elements of their rear. The Taliban, then the ruling anti-US clique in Afghanistan, is now waging a rebellion against the pro-US puppet regime in that country. Nonetheless, even if Musharraf largely follows what his imperialist masters decree, he clandestinely allows the Taliban to enter and exit freely through the Pakistani-Afghan border to intensify the US' need for his services and as a means of wheedling more US aid.

Fascism and people's resistance

Killings and abductions by military forces of Musharraf's political enemies, media people and many others opposed to his rule have become widespread since the general seized state power in 1999. Musharraf has launched military campaigns against fundamentalist Islamic groups and other organized groups opposed to his rule. He has unleashed death squads to perpetrate killings and massacres and established secret prisons to detain and torture his enemies.

He has unabashedly abandoned all pretenses to being a law-abiding man. In March 2007, he arbitrarily fired Supreme Court chief justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry after the latter decided to hear the many cases involving





abductions and killings by military forces as well as cases questioning the legality of Musharraf's rule. Musharraf was forced to restore the chief magistrate to his post after the entire Supreme Court opposed Musharraf's actions and after widespread people's protests.

In November 2007, Musharraf declared emergency rule, citing the Taliban's presence in Pakistan's northwestern region near its borders with Afghanistan. But he trained his fascist guns not against the Taliban but against his regime's critics. Musharraf suspended the constitution, arrested opposition leaders, attacked the Supreme Court and deposed Chaudhry anew due to his refusal to support emergency rule. The dictator withdrew the declaration only after the Supreme Court approved his electoral candidacy.

Both the local economy and people's living standards are in the doldrums. The wretchedness of the majority and the widespread suppression of their rights have pushed them to resist and repudi-

ate the dictatorship.

Musharraf manages to stay in power only through US support, his tight grip on the military bureaucracy and the severe repression of the Pakistani people. But the people of Pakistan have long been fighting Musharraf's rule. Resistance to the Musharraf dictatorship is one of the issues binding the broad anti-dictatorship alliance composed of the revolutionary forces, various sectors of the people as well as bourgeois reformists and Islamic groups.

US-Bhutto-Musharraf agreement

The US has taken steps to give the Musharraf dictatorship a makeover in the face of growing people's resistance and the widespread exposure and criticism the regime has reaped worldwide. The US thus pushed for Bhutto's return from exile to serve as prime minister and give Musharraf's military dictatorship a civilian veneer. It is the US that served as the chief broker of Musharraf and Bhutto's reconciliation.

But despite such pretenses, the truth is out about the US' undeniable interests in the country and region. The US still considers Musharraf its number one puppet in the country and region and it has no intentions of dropping the dictator despite everything that has happened.

Nonetheless, beneath his puppety to US imperialism, Musharraf has relative independence to plot moves to consolidate his position and ensure his autocratic power and interests against his rivals.

Musharraf is taking advantage of the US' difficult situation in the region and its desperate reliance on brutal puppets like him, to manipulate conditions to his advantage even as he remains completely subservient to US imperialism.

Even now, the US is already trying to absolve its butcher puppet of all blame by floating an alleged intelligence report by the Central Intelligence Agency stating that "Pakistani militantsA" were behind Bhutto's assassination. AB

False report on Glorietta blast now final

AS expected, the regime put closure last January 10 on its bombing of the Glorietta 2 mall in Makati City in October by declaring it an accident. This is to completely wash its hands of the heinous crime that killed 11 persons and injured more than a hundred others. Fifteen employees and firefighters were slapped with negligence charges in relation to the explosion.

The PNP's final report was no different from its previous one asserting that the explosion was caused by a methane and diesel gas buildup despite the discovery by Philippine Army (PA) bomb experts of RDX at the blast site. RDX is an ingredient in making C4 explosives.

Maj. Allan Sollano, chief of the PA Explosives and

Ordnance Battalion was slapped with a gag order after he announced the discovery of RDX traces in a plastic bag found at the site.

Worse, the police's final report makes no mention at all of Major Sollano's team even if it was among the first groups to respond after the blast. The military also prohibited Major Sollano from giving interviews to the media after the incident.

The final report also did not consider the results of an independent investigation conducted by Ayala Land Inc. (ALI), owner of Glorietta 2. Experts contracted by ALI said the blast was caused by a bomb. Instead, the police threatened to file charges against ALI for allowing the team of foreign investigators into the blast area without the PNP's permission.

Militant groups commemorate EDSA 2

GROUPS from various sectors conducted a program on January 18 at La Salle Greenhills, San Juan City to commemorate EDSA 2's seventh anniversary. The program's theme was "Seven Years is Enough"—meaning, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's seven-year rule is too much. It was Arroyo who profited from the people's uprising against the Estrada regime's corruption and plunder. After the program, some 800 of the participants marched towards the EDSA Shrine but were blocked by the police.

Former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo and Gabriela Women's Party Rep. Liza Maza, members of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Black and White Movement, White Ribbon and Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice attended the activity.

KMU assails oil tariff reduction

THE Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) assailed Malacañang's moves last January 8 to reduce tariffs on imported oil by ₱0.50 to ₱1.00. It is not the people who stand to benefit from this measure but giant oil companies like Shell, Chevron and Petron, said the KMU.

The KMU said that the regime should instead rescind the 12% Expanded Value-Added Tax (EVAT) on petroleum products. The government slaps a ₱3.00 EVAT on every liter of diesel consumed by drivers and the public.

Groups rail against suppression of media rights

VARIOUS groups and individuals assailed an anti-media memorandum issued on January 11 by the Department of Justice (DOJ) through Sec. Raul Gonzalez. The memorandum calls for police and military control over media reporting during so-called emergency situations.

The memorandum states that media personnel who disregard orders from authorities during "emergency situations" may be slapped with criminal charges. Any reporter who refuses to vacate the premises may be charged with obstruction of justice. The memorandum was issued more than a month after the protest action staged by soldiers at the Peninsula Manila Hotel in Makati City. The PNP arrested and detained media persons who were then in the area for allegedly interfering with police operations.

To justify its suppression of the media, the Arroyo camp claimed that reporters would be used as human shields in destabilization plans against the Arroyo government. Gonzalez said his office had allegedly received intelligence information on a brewing plan to oust Arroyo on January 22.

Nueva Vizcaya peasants expel foreign mining company

ANGRY villagers expelled personnel of OceanaGold Philippines Inc., a foreign-owned mining company, along with their mining equipment. Residents escorted them until they reached the outside boundaries of the mountainous village of Papaya, Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya.

The foreign mining company plans to begin exploration activities in the barangay, but leaders of various tribes such as the Ifugao, Ibaloi, Bugkalot, Kankaney and Kalanguya asserted that they did not approve OceanaGold Philippines Inc.'s permit. They also said that the mining company was in violation of a local ordinance passed by Barangay Papaya declaring the village a watershed area for citrus plantations and neighboring barrios. The area is a source of water for the Alimudin, Malong and Pahduan rivers.



The Australian-owned OceanaGold has operations in 21,465 hectares of land in Kasibu, including the village of Didipio where it mines gold and copper. A temporary restraining order issued last year put a stop to its operations. The expulsion of OceanaGold's employees thwarts the company's renewed efforts to resume its mining activities.